

February 25, 2023

To: Connecticut State Legislators

RE: No to Bill HBo6633

Upon reviewing HBo6633, I am reminded of the following quote:

“Government is not reason; it is not eloquent; it is force. Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.”

- George Washington

HBo6633 explicitly subordinates genuine local planning and zoning issues to a top-down political agenda mandated by legislation crafted with little thought to the true nature of the specific nuts and bolts of the day-to-day issues involved. Does a legislator from another town comprehend daily traffic issues at the I-95 Exit 5 in Riverside better than a local official living in Greenwich? Obviously not. However, that knowledge pertains to a .60 acre parcel on Route 1. Will a Hartford bureaucrat be accountable in the event central planning creates overcrowded, dangerous pedestrian crossways on Putnam Avenue or respond to a neighborhood association's parking concerns on a narrow street? Hardly.

Undoubtedly, there are many professionals better versed on the specifics of infrastructure, well-water, and flood zone issues than I, but all are applicable to Greenwich, and flood zone issues are particularly important in Old Greenwich and Riverside. HB6633 has no regard for the realities of any of these environmental issues. Further, does anyone in Hartford understand that an extension of the town sewer takes ten or more years to build out and the cost is borne by those people who then connect to it? It is called a sewer assessment. Suddenly and unaccountably, too, open space and wetlands conservation seems to be forgotten. Once both are plowed under, they are gone forever.

HBo6633 is state-mandated ukase pursuant to what I can only believe is an ideologically-driven social experiment with people's lives and property. It is nothing short of a “taking”. It is force and a very fearful master.

Ideology does not repair pot holes and it does not magically transform wetlands, flood zones, into instantly buildable lots available for high-density apartment dwellings. What it may in fact do, however, is cause people to re-evaluate their decisions to live, work, and own property in Connecticut and ultimately impoverish the state, both ecologically and financially.

P & Z is best left to the local municipalities who understand the topography, engineering, and issues unique to their towns and to the officials who will be directly answerable for the decisions to their constituents and neighbors.

Respectfully submitted,

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